

Rabbi-in-Residence ***Rabbi Ziona Zelazo***

Rabbi Ziona Zelazo is an energetic and engaging speaker and teacher who is available for spiritually inspiring and intellectually stimulating presentations in your community. She empowers individuals with her unique choice of topics from Biblical and Talmudic texts. Her style of teaching is interactive.

Proposed Topics for Rabbi-in-Residence Visit

1• The Art of Visiting the Sick

When was the last time you noticed that a certain individual in your synagogue does not show up for services? Did you ever wonder how a family deals with daily responsibilities while one of their members recovers from surgery? When people in your community are not well they can easily become invisible. Come and learn how to be an active community member who shows care. This workshop of *Bikur Cholim* - Visiting the Sick will provide tools of how to establish a group of volunteers who will visit and support those in others in need. It will also teach you how to act with much ease and confidence, give you the Dos and Don'ts and how to be an effective visitor who can make a difference.

2• Is suffering accepted to you? Practical theology

Pain and suffering are universal experiences and part of the human condition. However, anthropological studies show that the perception, the understanding and the meaning assigned to pain and suffering are not universal and vary from culture to culture. I would say that each culture with its own theology. This teaching will address the difficulty we have when we are faced with suffering, both on the emotional and physical levels. We will explore the way the rabbis in the Talmud address suffering and how they understand the reason of why people suffer. This will be incorporated in our own understanding of suffering and how we might apply it to our own life.

3• Kissing the Torah Scroll – A custom not really understood

We kiss those who we love. We kiss those we respect. Did you ever ask yourself why Jews kiss the Torah scroll during services? After all, the Torah does not tell us to do so. The rabbis did not make up halacha for this practice. This teaching will explore the various texts that address this custom and then we will find the way to explain what it means for us to kiss the Torah scroll.

4• *Parashat Hashavuah* – The portion of the week

When we read the weekly portion each week, we often ask – ‘what is it there for me’? Yes. We can explore how the Biblical text could be reflected in your life – or, perhaps, how your life could be reflected in the Biblical text...?

Contact information

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Talmud blog: <http://talmudictreasures.blogspot.com>

Personal story for ordination: <http://ajrsem.org/about/alumnipage/zelazo5770/>